

The Screen Guild's Magazine

Robert Benchley
Ralph Block
Ann Harding
James & Lucile Gleason
A Genius Uncovered
by Robert Montgomery
Other Writers & Actors

SEPTEMBER 1934

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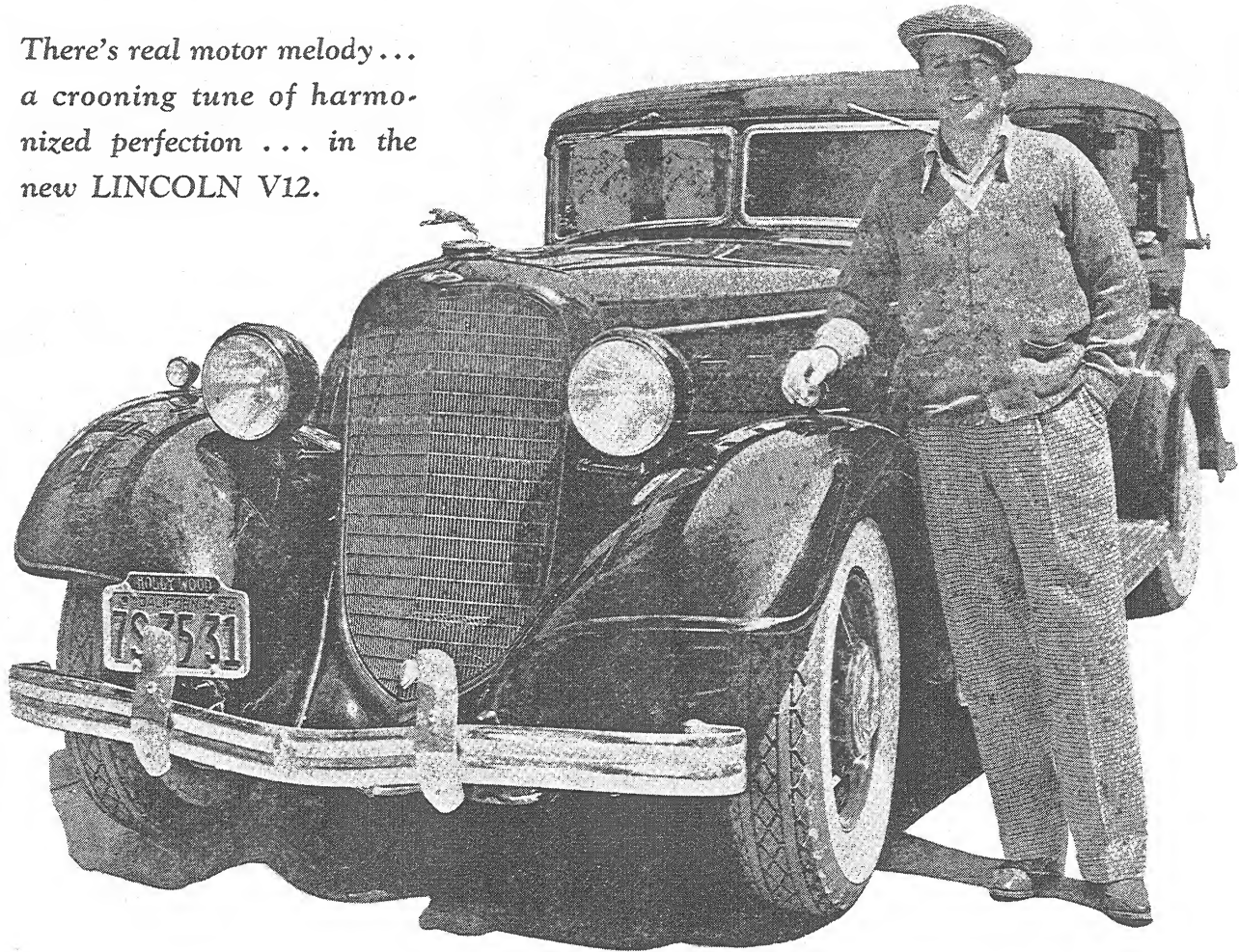
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The Screen Guilds' Magazine

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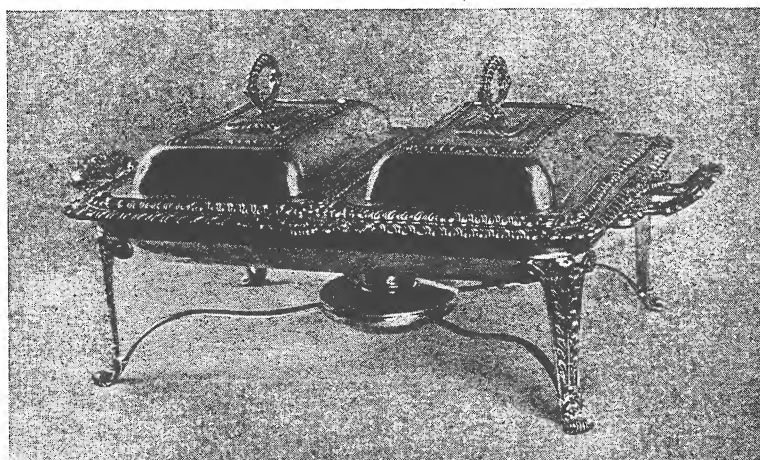
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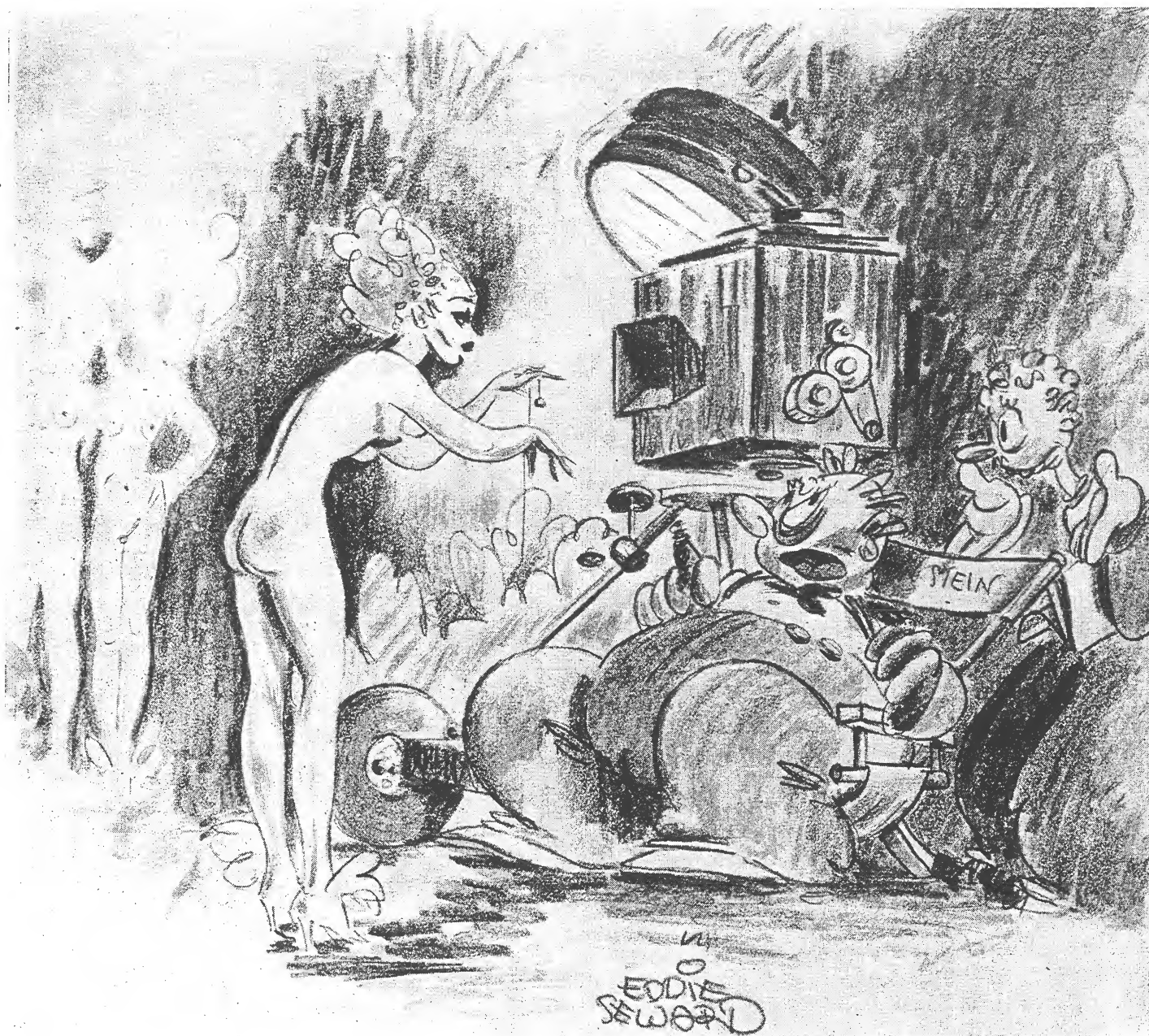
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Drawing by Eddie Seward

"Censors Again? Awright . . . Get Her A Bigger Bead."

"Unique and Extraordinary . . ."

By

ANN HARDING

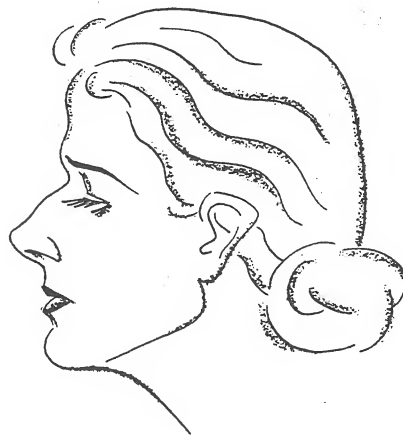
THERE is a clause in actors' contracts that always makes me want to hang my head, chew on a finger, dig my bare toe in the soft loam and say, "Aw, shucks!" A clause which claims that the actor is "unique and extraordinary." That is not inserted purely as a compliment, however. The actor is requested to endorse the claim, and is then required by law and various acts of producer-gods to live up to it.

Now, how can he—after the fan magazines have run him through their mill and turned out just another "new" movie star, complete, C.O.D. for ten to twenty cents, with a full set of hobbies, favorite colors, breakfast foods and purple underwear? A few months later, the usual routine calls for a lead: "*Is he slipping?*" and after another period, he is neatly buried in a two-page spread: "*Can he come back?*"

The answer is: "Why should he?"—if you are one of the thousands who have followed his idiotic path through the fan magazine pages, believing, as you read, that "where there is smoke there is fire."

How short-sighted of the mags to go so far afield from their grand old Pappy, the honored Fourth Estate. The garbled and twisted versions of what actors actually have said in interviews—let alone the out-and-out inventions placed within quotes—have driven all of us into our armor plate at the sight of one of their approaching representatives. At that, the misquotation itself is often less painful than the libelous grammar in which it is couched.

What started this de-bunking mania, anyway? All right—H. L. Mencken—you win. But why bring it into a field whose only reason for existence is to supply the escape of illusion to the millions who find life itself sufficiently de-bunked to begin with, and seek adventure and romance and beauty vicariously, through the lives of others? We—who according to contract are unique and extraordinary—have at least the touchstone of direct living. And that gift is



not lost to us—though the fan magazines pour the hottest of lead and their most poisonous gas upon us in telling the wistful the "real truth." Which isn't the *real truth*—what is?—and if it were, the greater cruelty is not against us—it is the veil of deeper discouragement in the wistful eyes that read it.

The fan identifies himself with the hero in an hour of high adventure and emotional release. He doesn't enjoy coming out into a sweltering or freezing or otherwise uncomfortable world, to find on the nearest magazine stand, that the person whose talent and personality have the blessed power to lead him into a land of dreams, is a drivelling fool, a fake, or a monster. He feels somehow that he himself has been insulted too. Our fan mail is full of such indignant reactions to the phoney filth, the bald "insinuations" and sewer rakings. They don't want it, they don't like it when they get it, and it seems worth a wonder whether indeed this destructive approach is not, to a considerable extent, responsible for the drop in circulation among the more blatant of the scandal mongers.

It is a little fantastic that the boys and girls become enraged at those of us who decline to contribute toward our own destruction by giving interviews and making possible those direct misquotes that too frequently follow our conversa-

tions with such pencil-pushers. They then set out to "get" us—using the power of print to avenge what they consider a personal grievance. Sporting, I call it. Naturally we withhold donations from the pages trying so cheaply but so doggedly to wring our personal and professional necks.

Fan magazines and actors draw their incomes from the same source. Both would profit by cooperating on a constructive policy for the benefit of the industry as a whole, instead of chasing each other around in this vicious circle. Mutual antagonism is burning brightly—the mags bristling with pins to stick into us—the actors locking themselves behind gates of reticence for sheer self-preservation. How silly, when we could really be of help to each other.

We turn to the Fourth Estate as our only true channel of communication with the world beyond Hollywood—and there IS a world beyond Hollywood, my little kiddies—a world that the fan magazines would have something to sell to, if they could win back our confidence by remembering the days when they were honest-to-God reporters—with a nose for news instead of a taste for unsavory hash. Some of them don't even blush when an actor says, "But that isn't news—can't we think of something that hasn't been covered so many times?"

Their way of earning a living is to shovel out so many words a month about us. If we don't give them material, they must invent it to survive. And we can't give it to them—as things are now and have been for some years—because of that embarrassing clause in our contracts. It has become a violation of our legal obligation to go into their ears as individuals and come out of their presses as rubber stamps of what they think all movie stars ought to sound like.

Obviously they agree that we *are* "unique and extraordinary"—and delight in printing in just what *way* they think so. Same to them! All right—let's cry quits and play something else. Aren't we all tired of this game? Let's pretend that each side is "unique and extraordinary" in a *decent* way, for a change.

The mags can always stop first—we are the only ones who *have* to keep it up.

Atrophy . . .

By RALPH BLOCK

A LOT of pretty good minds have managed to get past the motion picture old guard during the last few years, and into the stockade. Yet, for reasons not readily discernible, their communion with great minds in the industry hasn't made much difference. The paralysis of old methods and old points of view inherited from a once brilliant past, still holds the picture community in its mouldy grasp. It is a paralysis so potent that it not only maintains a strict embargo against the operation of new methods, more related to today's civilization, and new creative points of view, but it infects even the brains of the newcomers.

One aspect of this sickness is the picture community's singular absorption in its own affairs, its almost complete insulation from the large heart-breaking events going on in the outside world. Hollywood seems never to doubt its own destiny. Waves and high winds break against the walls, but nothing seems to disturb Hollywood's unconscious and serene confidence in its permanence. The community acts as if it were a fact of nature rather than a facet of a shifting transitional civilization.

In the animal world there are examples of this kind of implicit self belief. The honey bee has existed in human memory since very ancient times, and in the long span of history has shown a negligible evolution. Honey is gathered and stored, queens are born, come to sovereignty, rule and are stung to death when their day is done; the apparently immutable procession continues from time past to time forward and there is no sign in the life of earth that this processional of *apis mellifera* will ever come to an end.

From an observant, behavioristic point of view the life of the motion picture community seems to proceed like that of the bee, not a motive but almost purely an instinct.

Yet, while the bee has lived a long time, it hangs always poised on the edge of danger. A permanent change of only a few degrees in the climate of the temperate zone would sweep it into the limbo of poetic memories. In the animal world, danger is always lurking for the type that has used up its power of mutation and is no longer capable of adaptation to wide changes in its environment. The very weight and strength of the dino-

saur, and consequent immobility, was the measure of its doom.

For the motion picture such environmental changes are already on the way. A new Age of Ice can be seen creeping down from the spiritual and social poles of the earth. Its edges are clearly discernible from everywhere but Hollywood. And ignorance of it will be no protection against it; blindness to it, keeping the fingers crossed in the Hollywood manner, will be no guarantee of escape.

The first chill notice of a change in world temperature is in the pulsation from "out there," which in Hollywood we classify under the old and time-hon-

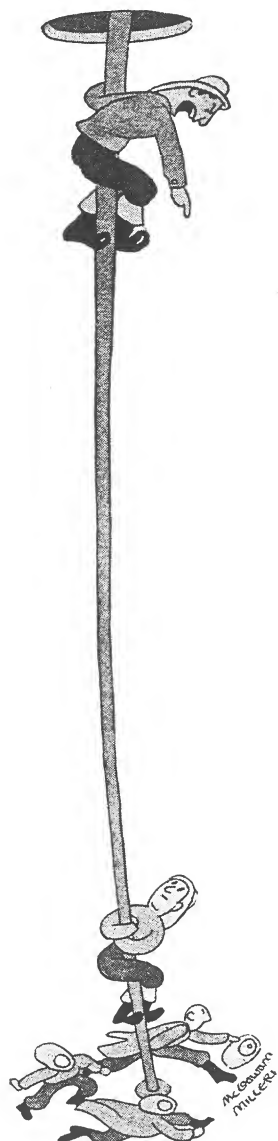
ored card index, "censorship." Anywhere except in Hollywood, where new thinking has become a fearsome and tabooed process, it is recognized that the sudden sharp reaction to Hollywood's product has little to do with the movement for censorship in its old sense. A Spengler might tell us—and be snooted at for his pains—that deep unconscious changes are going on in the minds of human beings. The world—that world to which Hollywood is wedded—is in her first stirrings toward change. She does not like the house she lives in, the street she lives on; she isn't very hot about her neighbors, her furniture, the corner grocery and maybe even her spouse. And when her dissatisfaction becomes sufficiently conscious, she may go further than merely asking her spouse to change his clothes and his manners. He might also find his business being completely taken over by his wife and relatives and run thenceforth to suit their newly developed tastes.

This little preliminary skirmish over what Hollywood euphemistically likes to call "good taste," which in itself is enough to supply a future Dean Swift with material for belly-stretching laughter, is only a slight indication of Hollywood's power to misinterpret what is going on in the world. This Malaprop tendency is more immediately important when it comes to the matter of the intimate tissues of Hollywood's own product.

The motion picture today is topheavy, as coagulated with special interests as a hard-boiled egg is with albumen. These special interests are the supervisor, the director, the cameraman, the scene designer, the clothes designer, and the makeup man. Pictures cost too much, and too much of the precious time of production is taken up with elements which should be subordinate to the simple basic facts—telling a story through the medium of human actors. The story is important—in its matter and its manner. The actors are important—they must tell it. Everything else should be contributory. At the present time, the story and the actors are smothered in the processes of production. The circus has a hundred cars and overpowering cages and canvases, and nothing comes forth but a squeaky mouse.

Somebody has to have the single responsibility for making a picture. (But the present method is one in which unimportant products penalize writers and actors by trying to buy the imagination they themselves lack from able but un-

(Continued On Page Twenty-four)



"Remember, Joe! If it's the Academy, you got a broken wrist and bum eyes!"

Con- fessions of a Writer- Actor



By

ROBERT

BENCHLEY

IT IS SELDOM that a writer for motion pictures gets a chance to hoist himself with his own petard, but several times I have found myself in that humiliating position. I have been called upon to act the lines that I have written. Boys, it's a living hell, that's what it is!

In the technical matter of supplying "toppers" (gag lines which cause hard feeling among other members of the cast) I need hardly remind the readers of this esoteric sheet that there are certain subterfuges, certain tricks of illusion, which make it *look* as if a gag had been written when, in reality, all that has been done is dig a *space* for a gag.

For example, when Mirabelle says to Toots: "Say, what's the matter with you? You look as if you had been riding a panther," there is obviously a good chance for Toots to come back with a quick one. After considerable pipe-lighting, the author of the dialogue compromises as follows: "*Toot's expression speaks volumes, as we FADE OUT.*"

Or, when Reilly from Headquarters says to Muggs: "Come on, come on! Whader yer think this is—a flag-pole-sittin' contest?" the writer is not really polishing off the job in tip-top fashion

"Don't waste no tears over me, Butch. I gotta screen play to get off me chest."

when he puts down: "*If looks could kill, Muggs would have murdered Reilly.*" However, in the script, it looks almost like a complete job.

I must admit that, on such occasions as it has been decided to save an actor's salary and use me in a bit, I have not known in advance that I was writing for myself. Otherwise, I might have seen my way clear to clean up a few pay-offs which did not involve "expressions which speak volumes." They might not have been exactly wows, but they would, at least, have given me a chance to say something besides "Oh, yeah?" or "Sez you!"

However, it has been too late when I found myself on the set. (I am not one of those boys who can think up a topper on the set. I have to have my pipe and a couple of other things—including the topper). I have been in the position of Mark Twain, who, on being informed of the report of his death, said: "This is my story, and I'm stuck with it."

I would like to have some of my little writing-friends get up and try to give an "expression which speaks volumes" by way of answering a gag from somebody else. It is a pretty sickening business. You can raise your eyebrows or lower them, you can purse your lips as if you were going to kiss someone, or you can blow out your cheeks like a comic in the *Chauve Souris*. You can also place your thumbs in your ears and wiggle your fingers. But somehow it never seems to be exactly what the director wants. The only thing to do seems to be to say "Oh, yeah?" and fall over backwards.

This year they seem to have plenty of real actors to go around, and so I am devoting myself exclusively to "the writing end." But, as I sit with a page of dialogue in my machine in front of me, I think back on the days when I used to be stuck with my own lines (or lack of lines) and try to give the actor a break. I have evolved a new bit of stage direction which avoids putting it up to the actor to kill someone "with a look." If the Captain has made some crack at Lefty which obviously calls for a return-shot, I write:

"Lefty apparently does not hear."

Cosmic Pictures Corporation is laying out its new year's program. Five executives sit in a huddle in the president's palatial office and chew their cigars morosely. The usual pictures of undraped Cosmic stars have been removed. The office now looks like a vestry-room. On the walls are hung "stills" from "The White Sister," "The Ten Commandments," Rembrandt's "Crucifixion" and a huge enlargement of the Hays office "Seal of Purity" in a simple black frame. Also a life-sized oil painting of Baby Lena, Cosmic's child star, in a prayerful attitude beside her trundle bed. The president strides up and down and chews hard on his cigar.

President: Gentlemen, what we need is clean stories. I've got a niece just twelve years old. Every Cosmic picture this year must be safe for her to see!

Treasurer: That's right. And Joe Breen says—

President (hastily): Dirty pictures don't pay!

Vice-President: No, sir, the public wants clean entertainment!

Executive Producer: We've all got to be good Americans!

President: Now you're talking. We've got to make forty features this year. Where are we going to get our stories?

(The door bursts open and a frenzied young man bursts in the door, the studio's story editor. He excitedly bangs a book in his hands.)

Story Editor: I've got it!

President: Don't you see we're in conference?

Story Editor: But I've found just the stories you're looking for. Forty of 'em!

All (incredulously): Forty clean stories?

Story Editor: Every one endorsed by all the churches in America!

As one man, they all spring forward and tear the book from his hands. The president gets it away from the rest and cries out dramatically:

President: Gentlemen, in our darkest hour of need, Cosmic comes through! I've found the Bible!

Vice-President: Colossal!

Executive Producer: Genius!

Treasurer: Tremendous!

Business Manager: Cosmic Productions comes through!

President (handing the Bible excitedly to the Story Editor): You read 'em.

Story Editor: First we'll take the story of that songwriter, King David. What a story!

President: We'll make it a super-production with an all-star cast! I'll personally supervise it!

Business Manager: Has it got any sex?

Story Editor: And how! Get this: "And there came to pass in an evening-tide, that King David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the

Index Expurgatorius

By DUDLEY NICHOLS

King's house; and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself."

Vice-President: Whew!

Story Editor: "And the woman was very beautiful to look upon."

Executive Producer: Edith Smith—the highest priced star in Hollywood!

Story Editor: "And David sent and enquired after the woman."

Treasurer: Uh-uh!

Story Editor: I'll boil down the rest: David finds out the dame's name is Bathsheba and she's married to a guy named Uriah, one of his soldiers. He sends a messenger to the captain—

Executive Producer: We'll make that messenger our comedy character!

Story Editor: Anyway, he gets Uriah knocked off. Lemme read the rest: "And when the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife and bare him a son." . . . Oh, boy!

Executive Producer: Wait a minute, wait a minute! What'll the Legion of Decency say about that?

Story Editor: Well, it's in the Bible!

Executive Producer: Yes, but you've got to take the Bible with a grain of salt.

President: Find another story.

Story Editor: Here's one about King Solomon: "And he had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines."

All: Joe Breen would never go for that!

Story Editor: But think what a musical! What a chorus!

Vice-President: Yes, but we've got to preserve the sanctity of marriage. It's in the Code!

Story Editor: Well, then, take the Queen of Sheba: "And King Solomon gave unto the Queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that what Solomon gave her of his worldly bounty."

President (shaking his head): No, I can't see the Queen of Sheba.

Story Editor: Well, how about this story of Samson and Delilah: "And she made Samson sleep upon her knees. And she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head"—

Vice-President (interrupting): I don't know about that sleeping on her knees.

Executive Producer: We can establish there wasn't any affair between 'em.

Treasurer: Yes, we could pick 'em up in different rooms next morning.

Vice-President: Why not let 'em get married?

Business Manager: That's an idea!

Executive Producer: Maybe they could have a child.

Vice-President: Yeah, Baby Lena!

President (shaking his head): No. Give us another.

Story Editor: How about a story for a great male team?

Vice-President: Now you're getting somewhere.

Story Editor: Here's a story about David and Jonathon. Listen to this: "And it came to pass that the soul of Jonathon was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathon loved him as his own soul."

Business Manager: Magnificent!

Story Editor: And listen to what David says to Jonathon: "Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."

President (jumping up): Never! We couldn't show things like that even before the Legion of Decency!

Executive Producer: I should say not. We were the first company to turn down "The Captive"!

President (curtly): Give us another!

Story Editor: Well, we'll take the New Testament: Remember "The King of Kings"?

Treasurer: Grossed millions!

Business Manager: That's what the people want!

Vice-President: You said it!

President: What's the story?

Story Editor: The story of the Crucifixion.

Vice-President: Colossal!

Treasurer: Genius!

Business Manager: Magnificent!

Story Editor: It's an epic! A spectacle! Great multitudes crying for Barabbas! Give us Barabbas!

Vice-President: Who's Barabbas?

Story Editor—He was a thief! A killer!

Vice-President: I get you! A gangster! Like "Little Caesar"!

President: Hold on; the Hays office would raise hell about that! We can't glorify gangsters! We've got to stay on the side of law and order!

Executive Producer: And purity!

President (explosively): The Bible's out! What other stories you got?

Story Editor (feebly): Not a thing . . . except a new novel by Ursula Parrott.

All (jumping up): That's it! Why didn't you say so in the first place!

FADE OUT

Vulgar Statistics

THE SET: A boudoir, item \$.....

Overhead, four juicers, item \$..... per day per man, look down. It's a C. U. of the star, item \$100,000 per picture, 3 pictures per annum. She is lying on a divan looking up into the lenses of two cameras. While the head cameraman (item \$..... per picture) instructs the head juicer (item \$..... per week) as to the placing of the fifteen or twenty lights (item \$..... per light, per hour). The two second cameramen (item \$..... per week, each) tape the distance and set their lenses on the absolute focus, not forgetting the little gauze filter. *This is a C. U. of the star* (item \$100,000.00 per picture and 3 pictures per annum). The slate boy (item \$..... per week) changes the "take" number to "17"; the set hairdresser (item \$..... per week) arranges a tress or two; the set makeup man (item \$..... per week) powders the nose; the head property man (item \$..... per week) rearranges the ermine coverlet (item \$..... per week rental). The six juicers (item \$..... per day, per man), on the stage, stand by, as does the standby painter (item \$..... per week), the assistant property man (item \$..... per week), the two grips (item \$..... per day, per man), and the two set carpenters (item \$..... per day, per man). The director (item \$50,000 per picture and three pictures per annum), sits under one camera talking soothingly to the star (item etc.), while the first assistant director (item \$..... per week), goes into a huddle with the second assistant director (item \$..... per week), and the poor harassed production unit manager (item \$..... per week) over the loss of time. Outside the lights, *ONE* of the writers (item \$..... per week) compliments the set designer (item \$..... per week) on his bridge work, while the producer-supervisor (item \$..... per week) listens apathetically. The boom man (item \$..... per week) readjusts the "mike" to suit the mixer (item \$..... per week), while off in another corner, the wardrobe designer (item, imported from Europe at \$..... per week) discusses the whole thing with the set dresser (item \$..... per week) and his crew of three

By

**JAMES and LUCILE
GLEASON**

(item \$..... per man). From another corner comes the clicking of a typewriter as the script clerk (item \$..... per week) tries to keep her reports up to date.

All seems to be ready—the cameraman tells the director he is ready—the director gives a few last-minute instructions to the star—she smiles at him—an assistant calls for quiet—the typewriter stops clicking—the stage janitor (item \$..... per week) stops sweeping—the boom man blows his whistle—the watchman (item \$..... per week) closes the doors. Quiet reigns. The director signals—the assistant says "Turn 'em over"—the mixer signals to the soundman (item \$..... per week) in the wagon or booth—he starts the motor. Inside the cameras turn over—a buzzer rings—the mixer says "Speed"—as the slate boy slips out he says "Rogers—Scene 186 take 17." After a slight pause, the director motions to the star and she turns her face away

from the cameras and then slowly turns back and looks directly in the lens—a whimsical smile twitches the corners of her mouth and she softly says "Yes!" A pause, and "Cut," the director shouts. "That's a *peach* for me." He turns to the script clerk—"Print takes one, three and seventeen. That's all for today—let's get a fresh start Monday."

And a day's work has been accomplished (item \$..... per day, plus item \$..... for film, plus item \$..... for printing).

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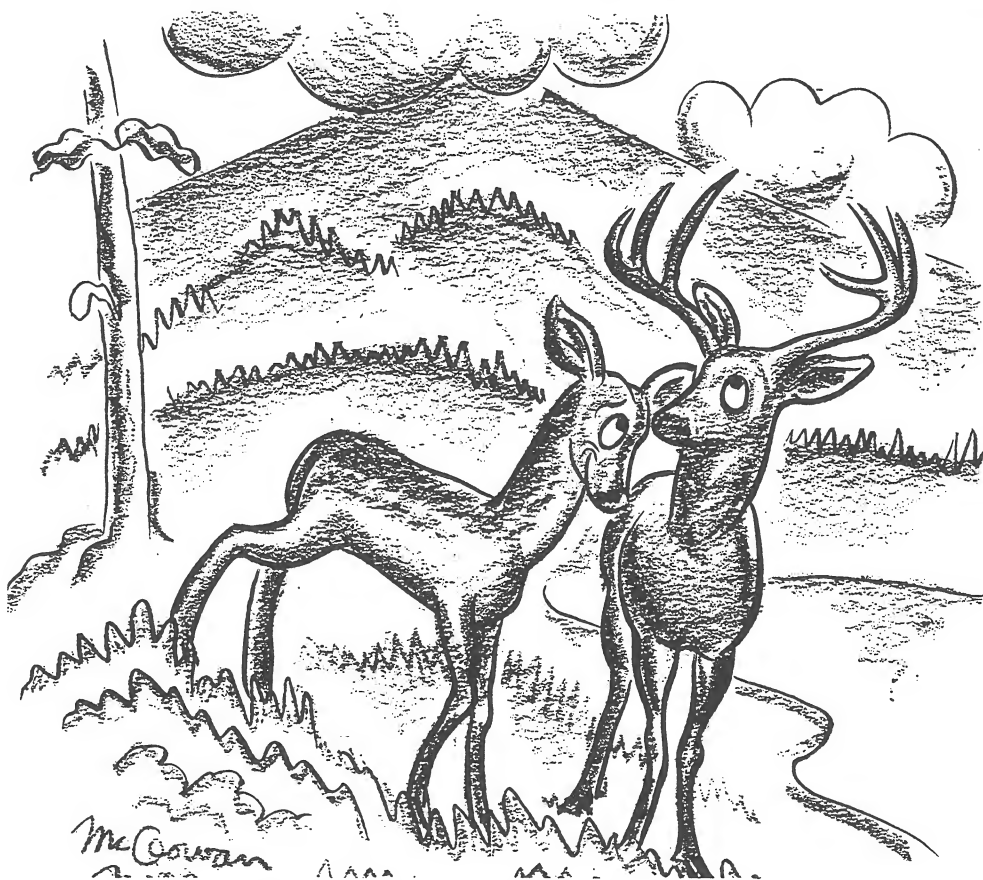
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"I think we're going to have a little rain, dear."

Pictures of Tomorrow...

WHAT is the picture business coming to?

The country has been asking itself that question ever since the infant industry made its entrance into a startled world. The nation has been shaking its collective head, raising its collective voice, in an endless attempt to answer that intriguing problem.

Of late, particularly, has the future of the screen been put under the microscope of public interest. It has become a legitimate topic of conversation and controversy from Maine to Mexico, in the tank town and in the metropolis, over the nation's bridge tables, in its Pullman smoking cars, its speakeasies, its schools, its public press, its churches, its women's clubs—in short, wherever two or more people congregate to discuss affairs of mutual interest.

Out of all this welter of controversy, you can hear almost every conceivable conclusion. The picture business is on its way down, or on its way up, or it's wrong, or right, or good, or bad. "You pays your money and you takes your choice." Which leaves the question right where it was, still waiting to be answered.

Would you like to know exactly what the picture business is coming to? All right, I'll tell you.

It's coming to "The Barretts of Wimpole Street," a picturization of the smash hit that stood hard-boiled Broadway on its head for lots of months. In the capable hands of M-G-M's experts, it should do as much for the screen as it did for the stage.

It's coming to Sam Goldwyn's "Kid Millions," starring that fair-haired boy of the box-office, Eddie Cantor. Combine Cantor's antics, Goldwyn's production and Roy Del Ruth's direction, and the dollars rolling in should sound like the anvil chorus. Goldwyn comes through with another shot in the arm for the industry with "Resurrection," presenting the glamorous Anna Sten in her second anticipated hit.

It's coming to "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," Paramount's version of that grand old play that had us laughing thirty years ago. Norman Taurog handles the megaphone, which means that the picture will be bright and modern entertainment without losing any of its original charm. Norman is also giving us Joe Penner, Lanny Ross, and Jack Oakie in "College Rhythm," at the same lot. And "Cleopatra" brings back De Mille in his old colossal form.

Darryl Zanuck peps up the industry with his announcement that Twentieth

By

RICHARD WALLACE

Century will present a little sugar-coated history in "Richelieu" and "Cellini." Both these characters have made interesting reading and drama, and Zanuck can be depended on to build exciting pictures around them.

R-K-O contributes its share of stimulus to the picture business. "The Gay Divorce," featuring the popular team of Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, and directed by young Mark Sandrich, should fill lots of empty seats. George Nicholls directed the old favorite, "Anne of

esteemed and gallant maestro, Ernst Lubitsch; and Pearl Buck's rich, colorful masterpiece, "The Good Earth," which is now without a guiding hand since the tragic death of brilliant George Hill.

The combination of director Joe May, producer Erich Pommer, and Winnie Sheehan puts Fox on the bandwagon with "Music In the Air," which will rally all of Gloria Swanson's old fans around the box-office. "Marie Galante" looks like a good bet from Westwood, too.

Frank Capra will try to top "Lady For a Day" and "It Happened One Night" with "Broadway Bill," for Columbia, and Capra is a pretty good topper when he sets his mind to it. Lewis Milestone gives Columbia another boost with "The Captain Hates the Sea," a catchy title which gives promise of some corking entertainment under Milly's guidance.

Warner's-First National joins the big push with "Flirtation Walk," under the expert hand of Frank Borgaze. And Joe E. Brown's new bike-riding comedy, with Lloyd Bacon setting the pace, will interest lots of fans who like their laughs loud and often.

Alexander Korda sends hands across the sea with "Don Juan," and countless thousands of youngsters will flock to see their idol, the swash-buckling Doug Fairbanks.

And to top it all off—the dessert concluding a luxurious banquet—there is a certain slender, gray-haired little fellow named Chaplin who has promised us another of the rambling inimitable portrayals that have made him the funniest man in the world. No one knows when it will appear or what it will be about. All anyone knows is that it will be screamingly funny and that everyone who can beg, borrow, or steal the money will want to see it.

So there you have it. That's what the picture business is coming to—a parade of sure-fire hits, classics old and new, interesting stories and fascinating people, which should most certainly snap the industry out of whatever ruts the depression and its other troubles have gotten it into.

If that line-up doesn't bring the great American public swarming back to the theatres, and hasn't the critics and the censors bending the knee and bowing the head in abject apology, I think I'll retire to the little farm which I've had in mind to retire to when I've lost my touch with what the public wants.

The Writer's Hymn

By GERTRUDE ORR

Spirit, quicken my song
That it may go forth
A perfect thing
Blue flamed, sun radiant,
Searing men's hearts,
Tearing men's souls apart
From mouldering bodies
Rotting in the slime
Of earthly lusts;
May it sing thru eternity
A vast reverberating melody
Of thundering beauty
Sweeping ever onwards
To Spaces undefiled.

Green Gables." And we are hoping to do right by Barrie's "The Little Minister," which stars Katharine Hepburn and which will carry the name of yours truly on the directorial credit card.

Universal has some important doings on tap, too. John Stahl will add to his impressive record with "Imitation of Life," aided and abetted by Claudette Colbert. And the old masters are represented by Dickens' "Great Expectations," which will give interested picture audiences a chance to see the talent that made Henry Hull such a sensation in "Tobacco Road," on Broadway.

Along with the "Barretts," M-G-M announces such drawing attractions as the popular novel, "Mutiny On the Bounty"; Dickens' immortal "David Copperfield," under George Cukor; "The Merry Widow," revived by our

A Post Script...

By AL MARTIN

Hollywood, California,
August 24th, 1934.

The Saturday Evening Post,
Philadelphia, Penn.

Dear Mr. Post:

I am a confirmed reader of your Saturday publication which comes out on Tuesdays. I read it from cover to cover, including the stories, and I wish to compliment you very much—I would not be surprised if your magazine makes a tremendous hit. You may use my name as a testimonial.

Sincerely,

GERALD TIMOTHY WELLINGTON.

P.S.

My Dear Mr. Post:

I see no reason why we can't get together. You have a magazine and I'm a writer. It's a perfect combination. Don't you think?

I started writing eighteen years ago and I am sure, if you had the nerve to print some of my masterpieces they would create no end of comment. Of course, Mr. Post, there might be a few of your readers that wouldn't like my style, but one cannot please everybody.

I once wrote a novel and the mailman got so tired delivering it on its many return trips from various publishers, he decided to buy it himself. That is the only story I ever disposed of for money, but then, I am not the impatient type and I don't expect miracles. As I have already confessed, I have only been writing eighteen years.

I hope you will not think I am kicking against publishers, because I am not. They have certainly given me service. And how! I had one story come back so quickly that the conductor must have taken it off the train at Glendale and returned it to me.

I have written many stories for the Motion Pictures, but that is more discouraging than trying to sell masterpieces to magazines. As you might know, picture producers are an ornery and peculiar tribe of people. You write a story for Shirley Temple and they make it with Wallace Beery if Mae West isn't busy.

Now I'm coming to the interesting



Drawing by McGowan Miller

Gerald T. Wellington

part. I would like to dispose of some of my stories for cash. I've got quite an assortment on hand, so, regardless of what kind of a story you might want, I've got it. In fact, if you like one, you're bound to like them all. You see, I've kept my plots practically the same, which saves a lot of time. As you know, this idea isn't original with me. But I don't think anybody would notice the similarity unless they read the descriptive matter, which nobody does.

I have a favor to ask you, Mr. Post. Just because I tell you that I've got hundreds of stories, I don't want you to think that I've copied other writers' works. I assure you, I have not done this sort of thing—except on rare occasions.

If you'd like something different, I've

got a touching yarn about a barber. It seems that this man started cutting prices, and in doing so, cut his own throat. I'll sell this story pretty cheap, but don't think I want to undersell other authors, because I don't. I will not cut prices—remembering what happened to the barber. However, if you should really want this story, I'll throw in another one absolutely free. The gratis one is about a gold-digger who was color-blind and the poor thing accepted everything from lead to zinc. It's a pathetic yarn, all right. I had to stop nine times during the writing. And I don't cry easily.

If you are interested in the above masterpieces, I'm afraid I'll have to have a little cash in advance. This embarrasses me as much as it does you, really it does. It so happens that the stories are in a trunk and my landlady is holding said trunk for ransom. But what is sixteen dollars to you, if you're interested in good material? Nothing! Or, at most, sixteen dollars.

I think people were more contented in the days of Pilgrim Fathers and Mothers. Don't you? And I guess, at heart, I'm a Pilgrim. Where they made their own shoes, clothes, houses, and other things, I write my own stories. But the Pilgrims had it all over me in one respect. They traded with each other. A man who made a good hat would exchange it with another man who made a good radio set or somethin'. What I'm driving at is this: If I could find someone—anyone—who would trade me a sandwich for a story, I'd be sitting pretty.

Now, Mr. Post, I don't want you to feel sorry for me, but if you feel so inclined, don't hesitate to buy one of my stories. I don't want to intimidate you, but if you don't think my material is suitable, I shall be forced to notify several of my intimate friends. These people are buying your magazine knowing that I plan to be a paid contributor of yours; so, if you and I can't get together, I guess they won't be interested in your magazine. You know how people are. With my kindest regards to Mrs. Post, I remain,
G.T.W.

Another P.S.

Dear Mr. Post:

Besides fiction, I write swell articles. Maybe something about gangsters would be interesting for a change. I am in favor of and against them. Awaiting your reply—
G.T.W.

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H o l l y w o o d

How and Why the Reader

By MILDRED FLEMING

WHO is most important in this funny business of making motion pictures? Deafening cries rise from every craftsman and artist in the industry. Every carpenter, writer, director, cutter, actor, reader goes home to tell his wife or her husband of the importance of his or her job in this business of amusing the world.

So do not blame the reader for his belief that the industry could not do without him. On what does he base this belief? Everyone must admit that the story is the foundation of the motion picture, and who sits in judgment upon these creations of our writing geniuses? None other than the reader. True, he hasn't final say. But he does "winnow the wheat from the chaff," "separate the sheep from the goats," "draw the line," "know a hawk from a handsaw," and he must be able to distinguish between "which is which" and "what is what."

In other words, the reader must place himself in the position of the producer. He is expected to fathom the great mystery of what the public wants; whether or not the story has universal appeal, that Aladdin's touch which means gold in the box-office; if production will be practical, and how the censors will feel about it. The reader is expected to have the literary background of a university professor as well as that of an addict of pulp magazines. True, his work is not essentially creative, but he must have the imagination of a writer and director combined.

Now, all this may sound like the wildest sort of exaggeration to anyone who has never been a reader. But every reader and every honest story editor will acknowledge it to be a true analysis of what is not only expected but demanded of a reader.

So, speaking seriously as between friends, it can readily be seen that the reader, at least, is justified in regarding his job as one of great importance. Yet what does this paragon of the literary world receive as compensation for his services? The NRA Code guarantees the reader, along with the janitor and the accounting machine operator, the sum of fifty cents per hour—or twenty dollars per week! So far, this minimum has not been put into force, but what is to prevent the producer from taking advantage of it? At the present time, readers' sal-

aries range from twenty-five to fifty dollars per week, and some even higher, with twenty-five-dollar-per-week people as capable, very often, as those receiving twice as much, but subject to that particular studio scale. And when an underpaid reader would bargain for a better job in another studio, the producers' agreement is often invoked against him.

Writers do not realize that a play embodying a cherished idea and representing months of work is submitted to a reader who must rush it out in three to four hours' times at the very most, with a detailed synopsis and criticism! A story editor recently remarked very regretfully anent a reader's output of synopses: "In the present condition of the business, speed is the essential thing. The producers want quantity instead of quality." For this same piece of work, the reading and synopsising of a play, an outside reader receives three dollars. How long would you spend on the synopsis of a play for the sum of three dollars? Especially when the possibility of promotion for readers, no matter how excellent their work, is as remote as it is at present.

The reader suffers particularly from "friends" and "relatives." Whenever an executive wants to pay an obligation or a debt of gratitude, or to give a relative a start in the business, where does he put him or her? In the reading department, always. Usually the newcomer has no experience in the making of motion pictures or in writing. Then, illogically enough, the producer kicks about the synopses he gets and develops an antagonism to readers, discrediting their value to him.

Every reader feels a responsibility to writers. Will his synopsis do justice to the book, play, or story submitted as a screen possibility? In his short outline, has he pointed up the drama, and the comedy? Has he retained the atmosphere and gotten over the characterizations? In addition to these worries, he is haunted by the fear that some other studio will buy the material that he has rejected and that this will reflect upon his judgment. But does the writer feel any responsibility toward the reader? So far, the answer is shrouded in mystery.

Not often, but often enough to be irritating, the writer blames the loss of the sale of a pet story to a "poor synopsis." Poor alibi and worse sportsmanship, don't you think?

The Breakdown of Stamboul

By

HARRY ALBEY

Discovered by ROBERT MONTGOMERY,
this breakdown of a script by a property
man is given, unedited, to a public
which cannot fail to discern that
here is one of those rare bits of
literature which smacks
of genius.

•

Map of the Dardanelles (Rogers has this), war maps on walls, pictures of Crown Prince, Kaiser, flag pins, rulers, triangles, Fuller's earth, bucket of mud.

A bunch of generals and spies squawking about another bunch, who seem to be out-spying them.

General's office, alternative.

19-20-21.

Generals, Von Strum, Annamarie.

Map of the Dardanelles, war maps, instruments, flags, pin flags, Kummel, whiskey, cigars and cigarettes, Swedish matches, Lugers (see about dictograph), buzzer, briefcase, canes, pictures on walls, maps, papers of all kinds, pens, etc., voice tubes, push buttons, phones, Wood's chair, dressing rooms, code book, more mud.

Generals fighting the war from easy chairs, worrying about the way things are going. Bring in Annamarie. Same shawl and same mud she was wearing the last time we saw her. They're still trying to get something out of her. No luck. Von Strum has her sent to his office to try his luck.

Interior Von Strum's office.

23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31—62.

Kruger, Von Strum, Annamarie.

Voice tubes, phones, buzzer, push buttons, papers, passports, messages, R.R. tickets, drinks, cigarettes, matches, reports, 6 large towels, muddy shoes, shawl, phials of liquid, pans for water, blouses for insert, chemise (get O.K. on inks), pictures on walls, maps, etc., running water.

Von and Kruger taking up footage. Von tells Kruger to get ready for a trip to Stamboul. Kruger goes out. Anna in her shawl and mud is brought in. We discover, much to our surprise, that they are old friends. She is his chief spy. She starts to take a bath (behind a screen so the churchgoers in the middle west will not yell murder, and keep their kids' nickels at home). She throws her clothes out to Von, who dips them in a liquid and writing comes out to the view of

Garden of white house in the Alps.

1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

Nurses, nuns, Annamarie, Beall, doctors, Von Strum.

Rosary beads, water, ice, cups, chairs.

A high-class nuthouse in the Alps. Annamarie, slightly goofy, still waiting and true for the lover she bumped off; everyone who walks past gives her a thrill, only to be let down when it is not he.

Beall, her lover, comes into scene. (For the benefit of the cash customers, he was not bumped after all.) Annamarie pretties herself, using a pool of water for a mirror, pinching her cheeks for rouge, showing that she is not crazy, but Scotch.

Dissolves station.

11 to 16.

Soldiers, Annamarie, people.

Autos, licenses, flags, Anna's bundle, stretcher, crutches, canes, coffee or cigarettes to give the returning soldiers, Luger pistols, bulletin board in German, French, Flemish and another just like it in English; Anna's shawl.

Some dissolves at the front (someone else will worry about that).

Annamarie reads bulletin board with a sad face. Most likely regretting how the war has shot the hell out of the American tourist trade. Get a look at Anna. She isn't going to live here any more, and we want to recognize her when we meet again.

Belgian Road—17, 18.

Annamarie, officers, soldiers, peasants, horses, etc.

Cavalry, caissons, Luger pistols (see if any flags or banners are needed), muddy bundles, bags, bird cages, pots and pans, violins, etc., wheelbarrows, small dogcarts, towels, baskets, rifles, Anna's shawl.

Blankets, warm water, plenty of towels, scoop shovels, rake.

Parade of the homeless. Anna staggers in and falls for the captain, and lands in the mud (as young girls often do when they fall for a man). The Captain, instead of lifting her up, has a sergeant lift up her skirts (nice to be a captain in war time). She has a pretty leg, no knots. Also she is wearing silk underthings, so he knows that she is no peasant, so he arrests her for a spy—for a more thorough investigation.

Berlin streets, stock shots. Dissolve into General's office.

19 to 22.

Von Strum, Generals, etc.

the camera. NO! Not men's names; military secrets. She wraps a towel about her after dropping a hint that Kruger might not be the man to send after the terrible Turk. She exits, leaving the men in the audience with a disappointed feeling that they did not get a chance to wash her back.

Int. Strum's office.

38-39-40-41-42-43-44.

Von Strum, Annamarie, Beall, guards.

Beall's passports and papers, tooth container, message code book, spectacles, papers, cigarettes, money, Swedish matches.

Kruger has been taken for a ride after his teeth had been picked. Mata Hari, because she is world famous, is brought into the conversation. She is not loyal any more. She can no longer take her men and leave them alone. Also it is safe to talk about her, as she is dead and so cannot sue.

Beall is brought in. Anna puts on spectacles to hide the gleam of passion in her eye. Beall acts like Americans are supposed to act in true story magazines.

(Continued On Page Twenty-two)

WHEN YOU ARE AT
YOUR WITS' END
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FOR THAT DIFFI-
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"HAS EVERY-
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Day Off

By WELLS ROOT

THE open spaces are so littered with the aggressive luxury which is the boast and blight of California that the problem of getting a change is pretty acute. But there is one place left, only a couple of hours from Hollywood, blessed with a bracing loveliness. You can spend eight hours without benefit of hot dog stands, alligator farms, or General Motors. Except distantly, you need never see a soul outside your own party.

This place is the Pacific Ocean. Five miles from land, California becomes a lazy coastline, a different country, imbued with all the lure and mystery of distance.

This isolation, perhaps, should be enough. But the Pacific offers, also, entertainment. It offers a sport for which people come hundreds of miles and talk about for the rest of their lives; and of which few Californians ever take advantage. A battle with a marlin swordfish, won or lost, is considered by most fishermen the most exciting experience available to anglers on the salt waters of the world.

They are about as hard to hook as any fish that swims. They do not bite the bait (a flying fish); they swipe at it with their sword to kill it. Then they sample it. For perhaps forty seconds after the strike (which seems ten minutes) the fisherman has to sit tensely watching the rod twitch and the line run slowly out. Finally, when the fish is completely satisfied that it is a Kosher flying fish, he swallows it and starts to run. The angler tightens the brake on his reel and throws his whole weight against the fish. The latter feels the hook and jumps ten feet out of water.

In the fight that follows he may jump a hundred and fifty times, shaking his head like a bulldog to throw the hook loose. You may get him in fifteen minutes; and you may get him in three hours or more, depending on his size and how severely he is hooked. You very well may never get him. If you fight him too hard, he'll snap the line; if you give him slack, he'll spit out the hook.

He is always a big one. A few have been caught in California waters over six hundred pounds. The usual run is around one hundred and fifty. No one has ever seen a baby swordfish.

It is not child's play. The day after having his picture taken with a swordfish the angler will be stiff in muscles he never knew about before. Probably his family, pretty bored with hearing the heroic details, will wonder what it all has to do with isolation, rest, relaxation.

Paramount

By THE POILLON SISTERS

JOHN O'HARA, the Pottsville flash, has hit one over the centerfield scoreboard with his novel, "Appointment in Samarra," which is not only a critical furore but gives every indication of being a financial. . . . Plenty of the boys putting the arm on Doug McLean since his new 65-foot power cruiser, "Comrade," was launched. . . . Bogey Rogers bapped in the puss by a flying fish on the tub's first run. . . . Jno. Dos Passos plenty sick with rheumatic fever; does warning him he'll have to spend next two years in tropical country, otherwise next time he'll be a cooked Spaniard.

Herb Fields has done a fence-buster on "Mississippi," which he begged and begged to be released from a short while back. . . . Grover Jones, the Last of the Bengal Lancers, has been lassoed by Vaquero Schulberg for his next three roundups. . . . Pat McEvoy and Va. Van Upp to Bedloe's Island for the dirty on the "Goddess of Liberty." . . . Jack McDermott twice mistaken by process server for Francis Martin; error due to luxuriant muff Jack had raised by irrigation between servings. . . . Leon Gordon, the writactor, wringing paws because he can't work himself in a part on the "One Night Stand" script. . . . Harry Clork claims he never got anywhere while he was plain Harry Clark; knocking out the "a" and sticking in the "o" whizzed him from a rewrite man on the Schubert chain gang to co-authorship of the smash "Milky Way." . . . Sylvia Thalberg donning farrier's apron to "Shoe the Wild Mare." . . . Lawrence Eyre, the old Broadway blacksmith, doing veterinary work on "All the King's Horses."

What with these last two epics, "Lemon Drop Kid," that Bengal thing, and Harold Hurley's "Fighting Caravans," this lot is coming to be known simply as "The Stable." . . . When Henry Myers asked Keene Thompson how he could achieve the proper R.C. feeling for his preparation of the "Father Brown" script, he was referred to a certain first-aid remedy which all reliable druggists carry. . . . Anne Morrison Chapin is a Pittsburgh matron.

The following tone poets now hold term meal tickets in this boarding house: the McNutts, R. and L., Dale Van Every, Herbert Fields, Howard Green, Jack Cunningham, Claude Binyon, Grover Jones, Francis Martin, Walter Deleon, Harlan Thompson, Miz Morrison, Miz Van Upp, J. P. McAvoy, Jno. O'Hara, Wally Young, Frank R. Adams, Dudley Nichols . . . a record number since the end of the Gold Rush.

Silver Silence

By MARY McCARTHY

IF MOTION PICTURES talked less, and expressed more—the camera would be able to tell better stories.

Most difficulties of dramatic construction are caused by our forgetting that the story is told by the camera; nor are words its language.

Words are vehicles of thought and feeling: they express, yet they restrict. Paradoxically, language dwarfs the very idea or emotion it attempts to interpret because some ideas and emotions are literally "too big for words."

Pantomime, by its very subtlety, *its lack of exactness*, is the language of the untellable, the language which has the world for its audience, surmounting every barrier of race, tongue and degree of education.

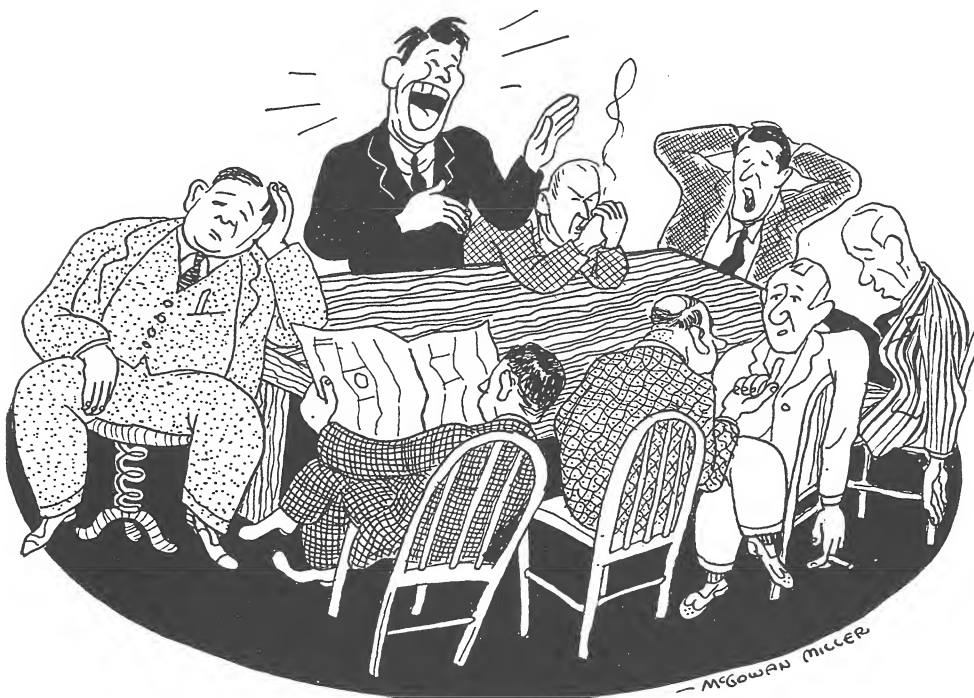
Only a few geniuses have written universal thoughts—words which translated into any language strike the common chords of humanity. We read the translations of various foreign writers—French, Russian, German, and find that their words localize their import—the French flavor, the Russian melancholy, the Teutonic viewpoint, color and limit the grandeur of ideas, the sweep of emotion. Even American and English au-

thors, writing in the same language, put words on paper only to find that they have become English style, American style.

Pantomime is the harp which any hand may touch into universal music, understandable to the naked savage crouching by his red signal-fire, to the scientist who is on familiar terms with the stars, to the boulevardier, and to the hash-slinger in Coffee Joe's.

The microphone always should be subordinated to the camera. Its role is to record what characters say, not what they feel. It should cease to function altogether when the character interprets those tremendous, simple emotions which, since the first heart-beat of man, never have found expression in words—nostalgia, the blinding ache we know when death takes arms from around our shoulders, the inarticulate wildness of young love.

Nor should pantomime be injected by the director solely as a supplement of dialogue. Whole scenes, the very structure of certain stories should be conceived in pantomimic terms, the writer using dialogue as the supplement instead of as the *raison d'être* of motion picture dramaturgy.



Gag Department—"And here he takes a prat fall."

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ASTEROIDS . . .

Viewed by . . . **REPPUT**
 Drawn by . **KEYE LUKE**

Jeanne Houghton

As a pastime she learns plays—not a “side” or two, the whole thing, from first to final curtain. A quick study. It comes of being in stock—one of the features of stock-trained actresses and actors . . . lost forever, according to Jeanne Houghton, who bemoans the fact. “Where can you get such training? A play each week—possibly two a week—all the best plays, all the roles, good and bad . . . what training!”

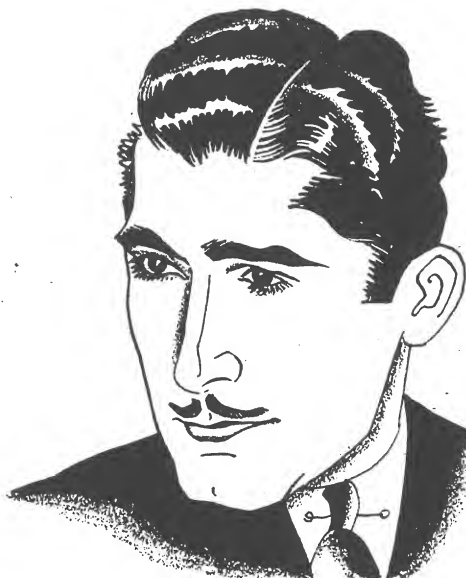


Born in Virginia, she made her debut in Richmond at the age of four. And early in her 'teens took up mummery as a profession. In slack periods she studied at schools of dramatic art, and dancing, riding and . . . well, all the things, including voice, which might help her grasp of this subtle art of acting.

Curiously—like the irony found in story books, and still more often in life—having prepared herself as a dramatic actress and having specialized, so to speak, in illusive pathos, Miss Houghton's debut on the screen was in a Mack Sennett short. “That was good training, too. . . .”

She likes Hollywood, likes the screen—never tires of watching those who have attained stardom acting before their severest critic and best friend—the camera.

The big opportunity will come, and she will be prepared to grasp it. In the meantime, it delights her to speak a line or two, or to be among the voiceless.



Ronnie Rondell

Was a copy boy on the New York *Tribune* with an itch for acting. One day a member of that paper's dramatic department got him a job at the old International studio, up on 129th street, waving his arms in a mob scene for *Cosmopolitan*. The virus entered his veins.

Since his arrival here in 1923, he has known literally thousands of his fellow actors. Out of that number, after thinking back carefully, he can recall exactly fifteen who have risen from the ranks of atmosphere and bit players to the lofty heights of being featured or starred. Conversely, he has encountered hundreds of former directors, featured players and even stars who have become “atmosphere.”

“Sometimes,” he says, “it kind of makes you worry.”

But early in his career he put the question to himself: Which is better—to spend your life dreaming of being a great actor, or to *work*? He decided that every actor should work for, rather than wait for, the big opportunity.

An atmosphere player, he insists, can not have a sideline; he must take good care of himself, maintain a suitable wardrobe, work like the devil and, when not on the stage, stick on the end of a telephone so as not to miss the possibility of that big chance. Conditions under which an atmosphere player works, he feels, have vastly improved during the past year, due in large part to the Guild and the respect which producers and assistant directors (the immediate superior of all atmosphere players) have come to feel for the craft.

Dina Smirnova

Dina Smirnova was born in Russia. For seven months she zig-zagged across countless miles with a company of players, giving free performances in cities and villages. And finally, with her daughter, crossed the border after waiting another three months for the Dnester river to freeze over. In Rumania she played in the cities of large Russian population, thence to Berlin, thence to Paris. J. J. Schubert brought her to America



with the Russian Review. And all went well for a season. But what came after that seemed not so bad to one who had hungered, starved, danced with frozen feet during the Revolution.

Among her appearances on the American stage was a part in a play by Lynn Starling—“A Cup of Sugar”—with a prologue in which there are these lines: “She must be a woman untrammelled, who knows no law but love, whose breath is a living flame. . . .” But actresses can not reach those heights in America.

America, alas, is the only country known to Madame Smirnova where the actor is merely a worker. It breaks the heart—of Continental artists. There, one is loved by high and low, and loves in turn. There is a warmth to it—a stimulus. Here, when the curtain goes down, half the audience is in the lobby. They do not come back stage. Perhaps they applaud, but there is no sympathy. It leaves the heart empty.

STARS . . .

Drawn by . **KEYE LUKE**
Viewed by . . **ERYAS**

Dolores Del Rio

First picture part was in "Joanna" with Dorothy Mackaill, and since then has never stopped in her soar upward. Best silent role was "Charmaine" in "What Price Glory." Born Dolores Ansuinsolo in Durango, Mehico; father a financier in the capital. Married Jaime Martinez Del Rio, a local socialite. Discovered in Mexico City by Edwin Carewe, who was there on a pleasure trip. Came, was seen, and conquered. Widowed in 1928, she married Cedric



Gibbons several years later. Notable successes since the advent of sound were "Bird of Paradise," "Flying Down to Rio," "Wonder Bar," "Madame Du Barry." Voluntarily stayed off the screen a year because she refused to be typed in peasant gal roles.

Enthusiasms: The works of W. Somerset Maugham, the plays of Robert Sherwood, her bull terrier, Michael; the acting of Cornell and Garbo, tennis, perfumes, dancing. Hates turnips, writing letters and stints on cosmetics. Many consider her the most beautiful woman in pictures. Plays pretty good tennis, swims well and spends a great deal of her leisure time on the beach. Loves to go hunting and fishing with her husband. They live in a beautiful home in Santa Monica Canyon which he designed for her. Serves Mexican food at her table which is really good to eat. Doubts that Paris can ever be replaced as the style capital of the world, although she thinks the Hollywood designers are indubitably exerting a strong influence through the empire of fashion.



Groucho Marx

The Mad Quartette was making its debut at the Palace, when Harpo became overexuberated and fell into the orchestra pit, wounding a trombonist. Groucho, who was in the midst of lighting a cigar, was so shocked at his brother's whoosh over the footlights that he set afire the crepe hair moustache he was wearing. Since then he has painted it on. Third of the Balmy Brothers, his real monniker is Julius, and he does his best to keep the others as respectable as possible in their private lives—to not much avail. Gets physically ill from worry at previews of Marx Bros. pictures and always leaves shaking his head and *knowing* it's a flop. A model husband and pappa. Began his professional career as a boy soprano in a church (Goy), but was fired for puncturing the organ bellows with the alto's hatpin. Graduated to warbling, dressed as a girl member of the LeRoy Trio, for five bucks a week and expenses. Fired when his voice dismayingly turned from soprano to baritone. First legit. part was that of the heroic newsboy in "The Man of Her Choice." First break came in Nocogdoches, Texas. Their musical act, "Fun In Hi Skule," had just started when somebody hollered that a mule had busted loose. The house immediately emptied. This so infuriated the Marxians that when the audience came back they burlesqued the act—and panicked 'em. After rising to an ace vaude act, Groucho and the boys entered musical comedy in 1923 in "I'll Say She Is." It ran two years and was followed by "The Cocoanuts" and "Animal Crackers," each also good for biennials. Entered pictures in 1929. Making their last two musicals as pictures, they then did "Monkey Business," "Horse Feathers," and "Duck Soup." Groucho is one of the most popular persons in show business.

Jeannette MacDonald

Real name Jeanette MacDonald, she was the youngest daughter of a Philadelphia contractor with political leanings. Perfume makes her sneeze, so she uses none. Has two dogs and a cat and is a good pianist. Broke into show business professionally when her sister Blossom, who was dancing in Ned Wayburn's "Demi-Tasse Revue" at the New York Capitol, took her back stage and introduced her to the boss. Appeared in several of that maestro's revues, took voice



lessons and worked out with the Scarlatine Rash girls. Picked up pin money by modelling fur coats. Now the fur coats do the modelling. Also posed for commercial photographers. Got her first break in "Fantastic Fricassee." Zelda Sears caught the show and Jeanette and got her a contract with Henry W. Savage. For him she played small parts in "Magic Ring" and "Tiptoes" until she got her first prima donna part in "Sunny Days." Co-starred in "Yes, Yes, Yvette" and "Angela." Lubitsch in 1929 cast her opposite Chevalier in "The Love Parade" and since then she has been Hollywood's foremost diva. Among her other successes have been "The Vagabond King," "One Hour With You," "Love Me Tonight" and "The Cat and the Fiddle." "Naughty Marietta" which is being prepared for her and "The Merry Widow" are opera MacDonald fans are eagerly looking forward to. Works hard at her music and the study of foreign languages, reads detective yarns and collects little doll orchestras. Not much interested in having a husband around the house tripping over the dogs and the cat. Not for the present, anyway.

Who Said Dancing Was An Art?

By JACK LOUGHBOROUGH

THAT'S a fair question. Who did? Dancing at one time was something of beauty—a joy at least, if not forever. Today it has become a rather ludicrous sequence of the jitters. What I mean, it isn't art. There's no reason, either, why, having once been, it shouldn't be now.

I mentioned art. Art undoubtedly owes its claim to deathlessness insofar as it is ever new, ever fresh, ever breaking out into unique expressions which stir

our emotions—appeal to our souls—and symbolize the cultural development of the civilization in which they appear.

Music, the purest of the arts, has been described as "thought in search of a word." That is too melodious a definition. Music is simply a logical compounding of time, pitch, tone and harmony. As such, however, in its representation, music is transitory. Notes die with their beats.

Painting is putting music down in fast pigment: it is the study and recording of line and color. Painting remains. But, so often, when viewing a painting, I have wondered why the artist chose to "freeze" his model in that specific pose. Still more, it has occurred to me that painting is limited thereby. It can suggest motion, but it is still inert.

Of poetry, it is at its best suggestive; whereas prose is informative. Iambic pentameter in blank verse can be the happy medium of the two; and can be likewise tiresome. The analogy, however, is applicable hereto in the inter-relations of poetry and prose, and painting and music.

Sculpture is three dimensional painting. It is mass, contour—volume. You realize that if Myron's *Discobolus* were to let go his disc, his well-formed arm would crack and crumble.

So what is our conclusion concerning art? It is this: the concept of *motion* underlies each mode of expression. Where there is no actual motion, art suffers through this inadequacy. We wish music could remain; we wish the soldier in the painting would actually draw his sword; we fear for the safety of the piece of sculpture were it to move.

There must be, then, some satisfactory aesthetic expression which will encompass all these forms of art, and will, simultaneously, be unhampered by any of their inherent peculiarities. It will not exceed their greatness; it will supplement it. It will manifest motion, freedom and grace.

Such is dancing, as a fine art. It is a most complex, yet interesting offering to the solution of this problem. Some schools of thought respectively agree or deny that dancing is an art at all. Nevertheless, we are compelled to admit that dancing is a pretty satisfactory answer to the matter at hand. It is a portrayal of time, space, color, rhythm, contour and motion all in one. It is music fused with flesh; it is spontaneously emotional; it is adequately informative, and ideally suggestive. It can make you laugh or cry.

In this day, when dancing is likened to monkeys doing a Highland fling—when, as a matter of fact, affected boredom and sophistication are pretty much on the wane, it's thrilling to see real and sincere expressive dancing. Any step back to ancient classicism is really a step forward.

And as a very refreshing retreat from the prevalent ballroom biology, I make the earnest suggestion you drop in to see one of the ballets that is coming to the City of the Angels.



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Research

AN INTERVIEW

By CY ALLEN

IT IS NOT looking up material and facts about things which are, and have been, that causes studio research workers to burn midnight electricity.

It is looking up facts to authenticate something that never has been!

So declares Elizabeth McGaffey, veteran Research Department head at RKO-Radio, the woman who organized the first such department in Hollywood.

According to Mrs. McGaffey, the troubles for herself and co-workers began when all of the studios took notions, simultaneously, to make costume plays.

It is the intelligent and laudable desire of all modern, energetic producers to make pictures unlike the pictures made by any other producer. They are all trying to get away from the old "vicious cycle" business, which formerly resulted in every producer making a picture like the successful film some other producer produced the previous week.

What happens, according to Mrs. McGaffey, is this:

"There is no law prohibiting two producers from having the same idea at approximately the same time.

"They both decide to make a costume drama and immediately begin preparations, among which is the work of routine authentication of costumes, customs, laws, physical appearances and so on *ad infinitum*, of the historical period in which the production is to be enacted.

"Everything is ready to go when the producers suddenly discover that they are both playing with the same fundamental idea.

"There is but one logical, sensible and economical remedy, and that remedy devolves upon the shoulders of the research department and its minions.

"We must add a few decades, or subtract a few decades from the period of the production, so that the same story can take place in entirely different surroundings.

"And that is where we begin proving things that do not exist and never did exist. These things run into astonishing numbers, and each of these things also multiplies into myriads of details.

"It would require a book to list them all and to explain how we succeed, finally, in producing the desired result.

"I can, however, quote an example that will give a fair idea. Incidentally,

the example is fiction and applicable to no particular occurrence on the RKO lot.

"Miss Blank, leading star of the lot, is cast, costumed, coiffeured and prepared to be a beautiful heroine of the Civil War days. Then it is decided to enact the plot against medieval times. Hurriedly we find new costume ideas, and new coiffeurs, but, alas, Miss Blank does not look so well in them.

"It is then up to the Research Department to manage somehow to authenticate the first costumes so that they can be used in the older settings!

"We turn to our beloved books on paintings. We find some artist of the period who has painted a portrait of a woman in clothes that resemble what we want. The fact that the original portrait hangs in a renowned gallery in Europe answers a multitude of protests.

"But there was once when I quit before I started. A celebrated British writer asked me for information to be used in his first original story at the studio. The plot revolved about the sufferings and humiliations of a beautiful young actress because she had been divorced in Hollywood!"



A Remarkable Change!

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In M-G-M's "Operator 13" it was SATIN SMOOTH Make-Up that enabled the lovely Marion Davies to create the characterization of Mary, the octaroon—without losing one jot of her familiar charm.

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The Call Board

UNLIKE the comic road show favorites of twenty years ago, motion picture actors are rarely stranded. The great majority of picture producers are financially responsible, and the actor need not worry about any resilient material in his pay check.

Occasionally, however, a promoter with little or no backing engages space in a rental studio and starts a picture, in the vain hope that he will be able to raise the money to meet salaries when they are due.

In one case, after four months of waiting, an entire cast has been forced to accept two-thirds of the salary due, with notes for the balance payable in two months, or six months from the closing date of the picture.

Fortunately, cases of this nature are rare. They occur frequently enough, however, to cause great embarrassment to the reputable producers of independent pictures, who furnish employment each year to hundreds of actors.

Many actors do not realize the importance of the independent producer to our industry. Besides the employ-

ment he furnishes, he provides an invaluable training and proving ground for younger players, who are, unfortunately for him, usually signed by major studios as soon as they show signs of popularity. Many young featured players of today owe their position to the willingness of the independent producer to experiment, and many stars of yesterday have reason to be grateful for the opportunity given them to stage a "comeback."

Realizing the real worth of the independents, and knowing that as a whole they are honest and sincere men struggling to get a foothold on the ladder of motion picture success, the Guild wishes to help them to blot out the "fly-by-night" individuals who besmirch their reputations. The Guild has met with the executive board of the Independent Motion Picture Producers' Association and has reached an understanding with them. So, in the future, if you receive an offer from an independent you do not know, just communicate with the Guild office, and its Secretary will give you a complete report on the standing of the pro-

ducer. This service for Guild members was made possible by the cooperation of the IMPPA.

And—never forget that the independent of today is the major of tomorrow.

* * *

For several months the Board of Directors of the Screen Actors' Guild has urged a clean-up of certain fan magazines and other publications which carry sensational, stupid, and often scurrilous articles about motion picture players. The Board's first move was a protest to the editor of *Liberty* regarding its "Trade-Views," which are published with reviews of pictures and which are filled with misinformation regarding salaries, and flippant gossip.

Early in July the Board communicated with Mr. Fred Beetson, Vice-President of the Association of Motion Picture Producers, and suggested that a committee be formed from the two organizations to consider means of combatting this evil. While this committee was never formed, the Secretary had a lengthy conference with Mr. Beetson on the subject.

There is a certain type of fan magazine which is a definite menace to the industry. Their editors will not accept an interview unless it deals with the sex life of the one interviewed, or a photograph unless it reveals at least 90 per cent of the subject's epidermis. This policy drives writers, who depend for their livelihood on these magazines, to scandal-mongering and vicious attacks on motion picture players. Still another type of fan writer is dangerous, in our opinion. This is the gushy interviewer who succeeds in painting the picture of a complete moron in every interview he writes. It would be extremely unfair to lay all the blame at the doors of the fan magazines. Publicity men, in their efforts to get space for their clients, have given too little consideration to the material printed in that space; studios have permitted still photographs to be made which have no possible connection with the pictures they are intended to advertise; and finally, players have been careless and often stupid in their conversations with interviewers.

The Guild is exceedingly glad to publish the following resolutions, unanimously adopted by the members of the Studio Publicity Executives' Committee of the Association of Motion Picture Producers, Inc., on August 9, 1934:

(Continued On Inside Back Cover)

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The Junior Guild

FOUR months ago, when Aubrey Blair was placed on the Guild payroll to handle the problems of the extras, I confess I was doubtful of the wisdom of the move. I must also confess that I had not taken the trouble to investigate his past record. If I had known then that he had been fighting the extras' battles for nearly fifteen years, I should have been less doubtful.

Since Aubrey took the job I have watched the progress of the Junior Guild. Things began to happen almost immediately. Extras began to get adjustments for work done months before. When studios refused to pay extras their just wages, Aubrey complained to the NRA Grievance Board. If the NRA was unable to handle the complaint, he carried it before the State Labor Board, the State Welfare Commission, and, in at least one case, the Health Department. I asked him what he would have done if none of these Boards was able to handle the complaint. He replied: "Oh, I wasn't worried; I still had the Fire Department and the National Guard in reserve!"

For many years the State laws for the protection of women who work in pictures have been ineffective because of the unwillingness of women to complain to the State Welfare Commission, but these same women were not afraid to complain to Blair. Within a few weeks after his assumption of office, the Welfare Commission was handling ten times as many complaints as usual. Studio officials found it advisable to obey the law, rather than spend several hours explaining why they had broken it. In one case, Aubrey found a production manager paying for the services of children with ice cream cones. A complaint to the Board of Education soon settled that.

In my humble opinion, Aubrey Blair is the right man in the right job. He is capable of doing an enormous amount of work, and he has a very keen and active interest in every extra in the industry. He seldom loses his sense of proportion and never his sense of humor.

In my work at the studios, I have discussed the extra situation with many of our Junior Guild members, and I have heard complaints about the management of the Junior Guild. On investigation, however, I have found that the majority

of these complaints were based upon lack of employment. It has been repeatedly stated that the Guild can never function as an employment agency. It seems to be very difficult to convince some members that we mean that when we say it.

Aubrey Blair is doing fine work, and deserves the backing of every Junior Guild member. He is always willing to hear constructive suggestions, and if you have any plan for the betterment of the extra, take it to him and it will receive careful attention.

Signed: *A member of the Board of Directors of the Senior Guild.*

* * *

An assistant director who was reprimanded by the studio after the Guild had filed a complaint protested that it was unfair to report him when he had not reported two Guild members who were intoxicated on the set. We informed the assistant that we were not interested in that kind of protection for Guild members. If a Guild member was intoxicated and the assistant failed to report it to the studio and to the Guild, he was neglecting his duty. The Guild will not

tolerate intoxication on the part of its members. It insists that every member fulfill his obligations. In no other way can we gain and hold the respect of our employers.

A certain studio contracts with military organizations for cavalry troops, thus relieving the casting office of the labor of interviewing the men individually. Wonder if they will use the same method when engaging the chorus of their next musical production.

At another studio, notorious for its attempted evasions of the Code, an extra, buying cigarettes at the commissary, asked for some paper matches. The man behind the counter said: "Can't give you any matches—that's against the NRA." It is pleasant to see that the Code is working in at least one department of that studio.

A Summer Moon

By EDNA SILVERTON

A crooning breeze,
Humming in the tendrils of my hair—
A brooding ease
And a lonely cricket calling there.
A black design,
With a bit of purple peeping through—
A cup of wine—
An hour ago, that purple sky was blue.
And now, the moon,
Rising with the mist of promised rain.
The cricket's tune,
Droning out that ceaseless same refrain—
The moon again,
Flirting with me through the blackened leaves,
Ah then, you wane;
Like a lover, sight of you deceives.
A cautious climb,
Leaving every twig reluctantly,
No thought of time,
Nor I, who sit here long, expectantly,
The leaden clouds—
Selfishly they claim you from the night,
Dusty shrouds, burying the aura of your light.
Then you burst through,
Shaking off the gossamer of death,
Ascent renew,
Pulsing in the goblet with my breath.
Oh moon, be brave!
You are no slave
To fetishes and rites of mystery.
Ah there's your place,
Drop your veil of mist and clear the tree,
Hang in the night a pale, clear disc,
—Your cryptic face,
Like an old Egyptian obelisk.

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Breadown of Stamboul

(Continued From Page Eleven)

In true life he would be among the missing. Anna gives Von the high sign. She will tame this guy. Also she wants some recreation as she has been working hard and this looks like a nice clean young man who has not lost his pep in the trenches.

Exterior dentist office.

32-33-34.

Kruger, Annamarie.

Autos, licenses, window same to be on stage.

Kruger comes in with a sneaky look. Anna watches him from a car.

Int. dentist office—waiting room.

35-36-37.

Kruger, Beall, Dentist, Cops.

Dentist chair, instruments, mirror, secret drawer in cabinet, tooth container, lock on door, 4 breakaway doors, onion-skin paper, magazines.

Beall in dentist chair making a nuisance of himself. Kruger enters with a bad tooth. Dentist tells Beall to wait outside. Locks door. Drills in Kruger's tooth, takes out a container. This is the toothache in the German secret service. Cops come in, break down the door, pinch the joint.

It is war time, but Beall still makes a damn fool of himself.

Berlin cabaret.

45-46-47-48-49-50-51-53.

Anna, Beall, Escort, etc.

Trays, napkins, etc., benches or chairs, dressing tables, place for dancing girls to makeup, hangers for coats and hats, drinks, champagne, wine, beer (German labels), steam table, menus, wine card, coffee, cakes, some food, a spot with tables, water to serve props from, *corsage gardenias*, handkerchief.

Beall is inviting himself to a shooting by making fun of German generals. Anna comes in with an old duck. They get along very badly, so as to attract Beall's sympathy. When Anna knows that she has started the gleam in his eyes, she goes out. Man follows her. Bad words, which makes Beall follow to protect womanhood.

Ext. Taxi.

54-55.

Anna, Beall, Man.

Taxi, license, *corsage gardenias*, whistle, water for drinking, canes for people on the street, flags, etc.

Anna and the big bad wolf come out. Anna starts to get into taxi.

(Concluded in the October issue.)



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M. G. M.

By LEO, THE LYIN'

DONNIE STEWART sick with that hiccupping bronchitis. . . . Chuck Lederer, collabing with Kalmer & Ruby, called Mannix the other day. Said he: "Hey, Eddie, Ruby ain't thinking!" . . . Harry Segall going ping-pong nuts. . . . Joe Mank got his actress-wife to give up the profession and devote her life to keeping him in Nazi haircuts. . . . Jim McGuinness finally got sick of "Tish" after eight months, and grabbed himself a hoss-race yarn. Wonder did he hear that one about Mrs. Sloane at Detroit?

Half the writers on the lot in mourning over Marcella Bennett's expected nuptials. Although Doc Markie Rabwin is the lucky lad, not even those of us who studied medicine at college ever had a peep. . . . Robbie Presnell off to New York via the Canadian Rockies before reporting to Burbank to make some of his old pals squirm, now that he's back on the order-giving side of the desk again. Said he: "The great MaGuM has as much camaraderie as the contagious ward at General."

Herb (Nacio) Brown has 7,000 phonograph records. It'll be tough if he ever moves! . . . Kahn & Donaldson come here after they wind up goosing Bill McGuire's Ziegfeld picture at U. . . . Lane & Adamson off to Manhattan to steal some ideas from the new openings. Start here Sept. 15 on a long ticket. . . . Jerry Kern isn't here yet, but they're building three new offices for him.

Sam Marx back from Panama without opening his portable typewriter. Said he: "I slept under blankets every night." Ah, there, Sammy—and what did you sleep over? . . . It wasn't tough enough for the phone girls keeping Revnes' and Rivkin's calls straight, they had to sign Morrie Ryskind!

Bern Schubert's folks off to the East. . . . Talbot Jennings, sweating over "Mutiny on the Bounty," didn't even get to the launching of the ship. He thought Los Angeles Harbor was somewhere near the Hall of Justice. So what'll be? He'll go to Tahiti on the H.M.S. "Bounty." . . . Essie Borden off to Paris and London for six weeks. . . . Artie Freed deep in plans for a new revue starring Lupe, Schnozzle and Healy which will barnstorm the sticks.

When you see the "Barretts," watch that dog who plays "Flush." The story told 'round the Kaffe Klatsch is that the pet owner wanted Norma to buy him. Norma couldn't make up her mind. After the preview, however, when she realized how swell "Flush" was, she made an

offer. But the "Flush" boss saw the privy, too, and asked a sheer grand for his pup. Norma was speechless with amazement. Finally, said she: "What do you think you have there—another Shirley Temple?"

They're ganging "Student Tour," trying to make it tick. . . . Jean Hersholt brought fifteen "firsts" to Hughie Walpole for his mark. . . . Ruthie Cummings' husband had a close call on that busted appendix. Clinical report: Doing as well as can be expected. . . . Loos & Emerson off to the races and Broadway for the first breathing spell in three years. John is the smoke-eater at the five-five contests. . . . John Colton back to gag "China Seas." . . . Sarah Mason and Vic Heerman on D.O.S.'s new Crawford out of McCall's. . . . Kober, in the D.O.S. house developing something special about the crap shooting and chip games on the ol' Mississipp'.

Al Beckhard, the B'way mgr. of "Another Language" and "Goodbye Again," scribbling in the old Hackett office. . . . They've moved Fran and Al nearer to Stromberg. . . . Artie Hyman is bro. Bernie's new assist, replacing Mlle. Homer, a gal who'll go far, but not at Metro. . . . Maurine Watkins number 5 on "Dolly," the heavier Mank getting off it.

Zelda Sears back from the Old Country without a sunburn or a Boston accent. . . . Harvey Thew is on the high seas and feeling low. . . . Emmett Rogers giving the Pasadena auctions a play for his new menage. . . . Helen Hayes could not reach MacArthur for two hours the Monday morning Chas. was in town. Reason: talking to Benneh Hecht in Astoria. Incidentally The Mad Ones shot three censorable scenes in "Crime Without Passion" they knew Breen would yip about. Breen pipped, they scissored them, the initialer got the P.S. (Purity Seal or Punk Stamp, however you take it or leave it).

Wally Beery may be through with Leo when New Year's rolls around. . . . Bobbie Benchley left the Bev. Wilsh. when they drew the color line—which is a swell piece for Bob's window in the home-read Examiner. . . . Marc Connolly blames it all on Dud Murphy, but you really can't blame Dud. He was helping out a couple of New Yorker firemen who wanted to see the seamy side of Life. . . . Is Erskine Caldwell "working at home" (in Maine) to finish his assignment? . . . Eddie Knopf bye-bye to Goldwyn's to

(Continued On Page Twenty-eight)

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Atrophy

(Continued From Page Four)

necessarily authoritative assistants.) We could do with a few Reinhardts or their equivalent in pictures. The producers or directors in the industry now, who dominate their productions to the exclusion of all persistently artificial factors (that are always trying to climb on the band wagon of production), can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

A few persons will accept this gospel. It is unorthodox and treads on many satin-covered tootsies. It will call forth curses and maledictions. But while the profanity is dying away, some naive artisan will be getting ready to revolutionize the industry with a picture in which audiences will not have to endure a lot of unnecessary fol-de-rols in order to appreciate a well-written and well-acted story on the screen.

And what about these stories of the future? Doubtless it is too much to expect the Hollywood community mind to know that the American success myth exploded with a loud noise about five years ago. That million-dollar dream may be a good chapter for Hans Anderson, but it has no further place in the American legend. A new society is trying very hard to get itself born in these States and will keep on trying for the next dozen years. A large number of new points of view on the human spectacle, new characters, and consequently new stories, are lying around loose just a pebble's throw from several very palatial Hollywood offices. But even a pebble's throw is a long ways sometimes, and it will be a long time before these new aspects of human affairs are honored by inclusion in the Hollywood filing cabinet. It may be that any time to change the contents of this ragbag from now on will turn out to be too late.

Among the Indies

By LINDSLEY PARSONS

WHAT with the Mascot chapter putting seven new pledges on the serial unit, your traveling secretary is pleased to report that business is pretty good, except for the boys having trouble parking all the Packards and Rolls-Royces around the Mascot house. Nat Levine is figuring on pledging a couple of more to go so as to put on three shifts of three men each, figuring that some of the boys are likely to crack under the strain. The new line-up is W. MacDonald, 1b; J. Rathmell, p; C. Clark, ss; B. Cohn, c; B. Eason, 2b; W. Gittens, rf; and B. Sarecky, 3b. Ken Maynard is umpiring and says it is pretty foul.

The boys over at Monogram are kind of sore about losing Colonel Tupper. For a long time they figured it was because he found out that your columnist refused to have competition while posing high art stills, but it turned out that the Warner house had been giving him a pretty heavy rush, and that he is actually over there working on a thesis called "Racing Luck."

Butterworth, C., was over the other day and wanted to know in what period Cagney, W., is going to furnish his new house. Cagney says it's late depression era.

J. Natteford checked in over at George O'Brien's to do some work on "The Millionaire Cowboy." H. Tarshis is working out on a Bob Steele and horse picture. Olive Cooper is on a picture at Universal. H. Manheim is doing one for Bill Haines, having cut his teeth on a serial. Jesse Lasky Jr., who worked on "Redhead" for Monogram, is back at Fox, where his old man is getting ready to make a picture called "Redheads." G. Waggner was working over here for a while last week, but what with Monogram getting so major, he couldn't find his supervisor, and I guess he went back to the U. Anyway, I haven't seen him around.

Wid Gunning checked in here about three weeks ago, but we haven't seen him since they gave him one of those offices on top of stage 3. We heard a rumor that the stairs are so rickety that he is afraid to come down and is going to stay up there 'till he finishes the assignment and then get a parachute.

And by the way, I sort of hate to mention this, but most of the boys in the independent field are pretty sore about this arbitrary assessment on writers drawing more than \$40,000 per year.

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Columbia

By JIMOHY OCEAN

Harry Cohn recently caught a croupier dealing from the bottom of the deck in a local gambling hell and settled with the house paying off double on his bet. . . . Bob Riskin, back from extended European junket, claims he was almost shot by Nazis in Vienna during the Dollfuss blood-letting there. . . . Brian Marlow practiced putting in the patio for the studio tournament and then was eliminated like a tuft of arm-spinach under Zip. . . . Sid Buchman driving local realtors daffy (and everybody else) with his clamorings for a suitable hutch to live in. . . . John Wexley's "Last Mile" made a big hit over the ether with Jolson doing the Spencer Tracy part. . . . Herr Asbury will have two books bearing that proud old name, out this fall—a collection of famous news photographs to be called "Breathless Moment," and a loving Baedeker on the ladies of New Orleans whose names used to be on their front doors in stained glass. . . . Vera Caspary's play, "Geranium In My Window," which she co-authored with Sam Ornitz, the paunch-and-jowl connoisseur, is skedded for fall production. . . nice going, Vera. . . . Frances Manson looking very charming in a dotted Swiss creation.

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Dramatic Art

By LAWRENCE E. STERNER

Diction and the speech arts, so essential to dramatic art both on stage and screen, are far too often abused. Especially is this observable in screen productions. That consummate artist, Marie Dressler, wrote:

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The primary culprit for defects of diction and the speech arts is our public schools. No young child need be left without a fundamental mastery of those most interesting and simple studies. Yet, through all the grades, colleges and universities, they are dispensed so unscientifically that, to quote from Shakespeare: "The nothing they give so plentifully, takes from them the something that nature gave."

If studios fully realized the cumulative losses they suffer through this condition they would look more thoroughly to correct it. The public would be grateful.



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Fox

By META ARENSON

Bill (Tailor's Delight) Counselman was going to fly to New York to discuss with Walter Pitkin the possibilities of life beginning at forty. It seemed a long way to go on just a theory, so he took a trip to Seattle instead.

* * *

Philip MacDonald is a mystery writer. He has such a feeling for the mysterious that almost no one around the studio ever sees him. He is doing a script on "Charlie Chan in Paris" now, and a man in a black hat, whom we have been unable to locate, says he saw MacDonald entering Sol Wurtzel's office.

* * *

Henry Johnson is on the fourth night of "365 Nights in Hollywood." He looks fine.

* * *

Lamar Trotti is writing his first script alone, "Bachelor of Arts" from the John Erskine novel, after having been teamed with Dudley Nichols since the beginning of his career as a scenario writer.

* * *

Philip Klein is writing "The State vs. Elinor Norton" with his right hand and "Dante's Inferno" with his left. Some people think he is only watching a tennis match.

* * *

Ted Paramore is writing a spy story. He and Bob Yost (story editor) confer like a couple of international crooks. Yost's secretary has established a system of counter-espionage. Nothing gives.

* * *

Jesse Lasky Jr. of the Fox Hills Laskys is working on "Hawk of the Desert."

Wanted In London

(Continued From Page Eighteen)

are they over done in this jernt?! or perhaps it is that we have been fired on by the success of our foreign bretheren . . . if so, here is thanking our alien corn. But whatever it is, England is definitely going places in the talkie world. We could do with a couple of good producers, a dozen screen writers (yes, we have the stage writers and performers) and maybe a director or two, and an art director, soundman and cameraman wouldn't be amiss, but please, Hollywood, send us the best, the ones whom we'll like and the ones who'll like us.

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Within The Wall

Sketches by **ELMORE BRAUER**

China absorbs her conquerors always. Cameras have been sent there. The screen is still empty.

ISLAMIC INTERLUDE

IT WAS the hour of Maghrab. The western sky was aflame with a riot of color, and the filthy, narrow street of the bazaars was filled with a discordant babble of sounds. Shrewd shoppers haggled shrilly over wares in the dim, musty shops, and an abandoned donkey brayed in a gasping drawl for his master who gossiped in a coffee shop across the way. A skeleton of a pariah dog howled a mournful dirge in minor tremolo, and a scrawny cat with phosphorescent eyes blasphemed the cur with malignant hatred as it slunk past. A tired, shabby woman stood in a doorway and screamed to her brats playing in the gutter. They scampered home happy, dirty and hungry. Two belligerent men exchanged a tirade of curses concerning each other's parentage. One man, it seemed, was the son on a mangy camel. This he stoutly denied. The other was spawned in a dungheap—and Allah was called upon to attest to the veracity of the statement. The argument that followed was interrupted by the muezzin who wailed the call to prayer from the minaret of a nearby mosque. The man who was of putrid vegetable origin ceremoniously expectorated in the face of the other who promptly retaliated. Then feigning utter concern, both men dutifully prostrated themselves facing towards Mecca and muttered the Islamic *There is no God but Allah! . . . Allah Akbar! Alluh Akbar! . . . Ashadu ann la ilaha ill Allah!* The prayers were over and the city resumed its cheating and its stealing. From the coffee shop there came a hushed murmur of voices, the tinkle of music and ripples of infectious laughter. Faint gleams of light that filtered through the doorway bathed with a soft glow a group of beggars huddled together in their rags. They mumbled a concerted tale of misfortunes as they whined for alms. If their prayers were answered they thanked Allah the Compassionate and ignored the donor entirely. An ancient story teller growled in his beard and began his endless tale of romantic lies in a phonographic voice. He emphasized the dramatic parts of the narrative by clapping his hands and glaring at his listeners as though defying contradiction. The sky slowly turned to an inky purple and a welcome breath of cool air stirred lazily. It was tainted, however, with the fetid odor of dung struggling for mastery over orange blossoms. *Insha' Allah!*

WATER DRAGON

DARK, scurrying clouds raced in tatters overhead and the wrath of ten thousand demons was hurled down on the little village of Feng-tu on the upper Yang-tze-Kiang. The Water Dragon, who led the demons, was God of the River; and he sprang like a wild black monster out of the screaming night, vomiting a deluge of water and spitting mauve fire. He gave full vent to his fury, voiced in deafening accents—and the whole country side trembled.

A group of twisted trees along the river bank moaned tortured prayers to the implacable god for mercy, but the Water Dragon breathed his laughter and blasted them with his anger.

The crooked streets were silent and dark for the people were constricted with terror and hid in their beds.

In the dimly lighted temple back of the village, a few monks, unmoved at the tumult that raged outside, were reciting the Sacred Formula *Om Mani Padme Hum*. The dusty image that represented the Water Dragon sat in brooding silence on the altar before them. A thin wisp of incense rose trembling with uncertainty from an urn.

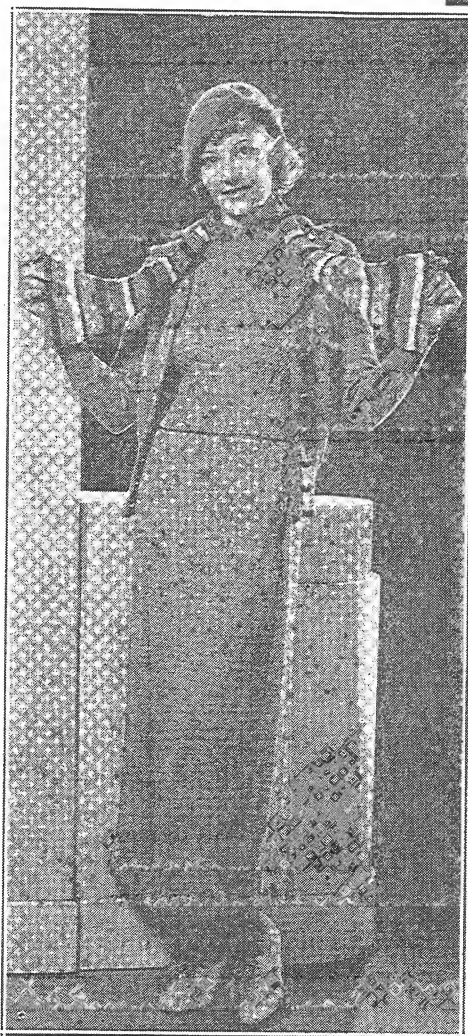
Then a gong sounded and the idol seemed to smile secretly—a seraphic sort of a smile—and the ceremony was over. It would rain no more! The tarnished light of day revealed a swirling sea of brown water that gulped and gurgled as it devoured everything within reach. It crept stealthily into houses and licked greedily at fields of newly sprouted grain.

EX-MANDARIN

AN OLD man with the sainted visage of divine melancholy was seated on a bench under a tree. His sober eyes were framed by square steel-rimmed spectacles and his chin was adorned with a few sparse but lengthy whiskers. He was abstractedly engaged in rolling two walnuts together in his right hand. Judging from the polish they had acquired, this had been a daily habit for years—it made his fingers supple and hypersensitive so the feel of jade submerged in a bowl of perfumed water became a positive ecstasy. Oblivious to the clamor about him, the old man dreamily dwelt on a favorite passage of the great philosopher Confucius: "The superior man has dignified ease without pride; the ordinary man has pride without dignified ease."

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By MANUEL SEFF

Blood-curdling yells emanating from offices of Ben Markson and Lillie Hayward. They're co-plotting mystery yarn. . . . Dore Schary and Tristram Tupper, ye ed., new tenants in Writers' Building. Received with twenty-six-gun salute. . . . Mike Boylan back from biz trip in Wash., D.C. Found Senate and House exactly where he left them. . . . Harry Sauber's new hat envied by Tom Buckingham. . . . Austen Parker's daughter, Dorothy, arriving soon to work at opposition studio. Dot determined to show her old man up. . . . Jerry Wald discards black shirts for white as Grandstands Go Wild. . . . Charlie Kenyon nominated to do role of Dignity in morality play. . . . Mary McCall receives check for 58 cents. Full payment second serial rights of novel in Sweden. . . . Earl Baldwin elected Handsomest Lad in Writers' Building. Retroactive to Aug. 1. . . . Roy Chanslor, author Liberty story, "Hi, Nellie!" doing dissolves and cuts in Burbank. . . . Ralph

Block, youngest Guild Prez. since Alexander Hamilton, great lunchroom discussor. Favorite subject, economics. . . . Erwin Gelsey and Del Daves having heated argument about whose hair is redder. Gelsey wins by neck. . . . Joe Traub gagging shorts. . . . Theodore Reeves walks when he dictates, as sec. follows taking notes. . . .

Songwriting Dept.: Warren and Dubin total 415 lbs. on scales. Fain and Kahal a mere 285. Wrubel and Dixon 291. Amer. Tel. and Tel. 146.

F. Hugh Herbert old Smart Set writer in Menck-Nath. days. . . . Aben Finkel shows terrific lack of interest in Caliente. Doesn't like their mustard. . . . Harry Hazard wonders if poker still popular in Soviet Republic. . . . Pete Milne claims tennis championship of old home town. Refuses to name town. . . . Laird Doyle has done Irish, Soviet, Mexican and Chinese pics at F.N. . . . Gene Solow hits 231 lbs. Tip out to sell short.

M. G. M.

(Continued From Page Twenty-three)

cover Main Sten. . . . Elmer Harris back from the Fox wars.

Roly Leigh has the cutest zipper silk shirt you ever saw. . . . G. Reinhardt and Grand Hotel Baum are Straussing all over the place. . . . C. G. Sullivan sold down to Marathon strasse. . . . The Judge let Jackie Cooper hie off to Lei-land. . . . Jules Furthmann isn't collecting Kents any more. . . . Those two English Public School laddies, John Paddy Carstairs and John Monk Saunders, are shaping up that Oxford story which Mons. Considine loves so much. . . . Johnny Mahin so night clubby that Louella had him spotted in two different joints, miles apart, the same night with two different gals!

If Howie Estabrook isn't taken into the Dickensian Society, it's a dirty blow at screen writing, boys. . . . Brian Aherne is worried whether LaCava winds up in time to get him East for his play opening. . . . Eve Greene is in a quandary. . . . Joe Sherman going into hiding till the privy of "Murder on the Diamond." George Seaton has Bob Pirosh with him and they're batting out an original in Hoppie's office. If those walls could only talk!

Hammerstein and Romberg may be given all the operettas to supervise. Nothing official, only a wish—on II's part. . . . They've got Woolf crazier than Pico. Two assignments, one of which Franz Schulz helps with.

Screen Writers Classifications

In case any Guild member may have missed the information, a new fiscal plan went into effect last month. Members are to pay dues proportionate to their actual earnings from the motion picture industry. There are four classes of dues, to which the members have been asked to voluntarily assign themselves. Members failing to do so by or before September 4 will be classified by a special committee of which William Slavens McNutt is chairman.

This committee reports that the membership has responded splendidly to the request for self-classification, and only a small percentage has failed to voluntarily assign themselves to their proper scale of liability for dues.

On September 4th it is necessary for the committee to act upon that small percentage who have failed to classify themselves. Today is not too late for any member who has neglected the matter still to speak in his own behalf. But tomorrow is too late.

So—in case you have been unable to send in the classification form—it is suggested that you call the Guild office without delay and request a blank, which will be sent you immediately.

Call Board

(Continued From Page Twenty)

WHEREAS, the undersigned members of this Committee seek to curb the inaccuracies, misrepresentations and exaggeration of facts by certain fan magazine writers, which tend to create false impressions in the mind of the public in regard to motion picture personalities, and which result in much unfavorable public reaction, the Committee herewith adopts the following resolutions, effective immediately:

That, in the future, all fan magazine interviews, stories or symposiums, which involve studio contract players, whenever or wherever obtained by fan magazine representatives, or free-lance writers, shall be submitted to the studio publicity director, or his properly designated representative, for approval before publication;

That each writer shall first obtain approval of the studio publicity director, or his representative, on any idea upon which an interview is to be based before such interview is granted;

That, insofar as practicable, a third party, representing the studio, shall be present during all interviews between players and writers;

That any writer violating these definite rulings of the studios shall be denied admission to the studios thereafter, and all future cooperation.

JOHN LEROY JOHNSTON,
Chairman,
Universal Pictures Corp.
HUBERT VOIGHT,
Columbia Pictures Corp.
LON YOUNG,
Education Studios, Inc.
G. S. YORKE,
Fox Film Corporation.
SAM W. M. COHN,
Hal Roach Productions.
HOWARD STRICKLING,
Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
Studios.
TOM BAILEY,
Paramount Productions,
Inc.
EDDY ECKELS,
RKO-Radio Pictures.
EDWARD SELZER,
Warner Bros.-First
National Studios.

The Guild urges every member to give full cooperation to the publicity departments in these matters. The Board further urges every free-lance actor to protect himself by insisting that the same conditions govern every interview he gives out. Nothing can destroy a career more quickly than bad publicity. The actor can control it with little effort and, in so doing, add dignity to his calling.

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